

SENATE BILL 591

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P2

2003 Regular Session
(3lr1729)

ENROLLED BILL

-- Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs/Health and Government Operations --

Introduced by **Senators Conway, Stone, and Jones**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this
____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, ____ M.

President.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Procurement - Security for Construction Contracts - Retainage**

3 FOR the purpose of limiting the retainage that may be specified in a construction
4 contract awarded by a public body under certain circumstances; authorizing a
5 public body to withhold payments in addition to retainage under certain
6 circumstances; ~~requiring a public body to release certain retainage and interest~~
7 ~~to a contractor within a certain number of days of after either the completion of~~
8 ~~the contract or the resolution of a certain dispute or contract claim;~~ limiting the
9 amount that a contractor may withhold from a subcontractor or that a
10 subcontractor may withhold from a lower tier subcontractor under a
11 construction contract awarded by a public body under certain circumstances;
12 providing for certain exceptions to the limitations on withholding; ~~providing for~~
13 ~~the availability of escrow for retainage in construction contracts awarded by a~~
14 ~~public body; requiring that interest on money placed in escrow be handled in a~~
15 ~~certain manner; restricting the availability of escrow in certain circumstances;~~
16 ~~requiring the escrow agent to follow the directions of the contractor in relation to~~
17 ~~the investment of retainage being held by the escrow agent; providing for the~~

1 application and construction of this Act; and generally relating to construction
2 contracts awarded by a public body.

3 BY renumbering
4 Article - State Finance and Procurement
5 Section 17-110
6 to be Section ~~17-112~~ 17-111
7 Annotated Code of Maryland
8 (2001 Replacement Volume and 2002 Supplement)

9 BY adding to
10 Article - State Finance and Procurement
11 Section 17-110 ~~and 17-111~~
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2001 Replacement Volume and 2002 Supplement)

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
15 MARYLAND, That Section(s) 17-110 of Article - State Finance and Procurement of
16 the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) ~~17-112~~ 17-111.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland
18 read as follows:

19 **Article - State Finance and Procurement**

20 17-110.

21 (A) (1) IF A CONTRACTOR HAS FURNISHED 100% PAYMENT SECURITY AND
22 100% PERFORMANCE SECURITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBTITLE UNDER A
23 CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION AWARDED BY A PUBLIC BODY, THE PERCENTAGE
24 SPECIFIED IN THE CONTRACT FOR RETAINAGE MAY NOT EXCEED ~~5%~~ 10% OF THE
25 TOTAL AMOUNT FOR THE FIRST 50% OF THE CONTRACT.

26 (2) UNLESS A PUBLIC BODY DEMONSTRATES THE NEED TO RETAIN
27 MORE THAN 5% TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC INTEREST, AFTER 50% OF THE CONTRACT
28 IS COMPLETED, A PUBLIC BODY MAY RETAIN ONLY 5% OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT.

29 (3) IN ADDITION TO RETAINAGE, A PUBLIC BODY MAY WITHHOLD FROM
30 PAYMENTS OTHERWISE DUE A CONTRACTOR ANY AMOUNT THAT THE PUBLIC BODY
31 REASONABLY BELIEVES NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC BODY'S INTEREST.

32 (3) ~~RETAINAGE WITHHELD BY A PUBLIC BODY MAY BE DEPOSITED IN AN~~
33 ~~INTEREST-BEARING ESCROW ACCOUNT IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 17-111 OF THIS~~
34 ~~SUBTITLE.~~

35 (4) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS SUBSECTION,
36 WITHIN 120 DAYS AFTER SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A CONTRACT FOR
37 CONSTRUCTION, A PUBLIC BODY SHALL:

1 ~~(F)~~ RELEASE ANY RETAINAGE DUE TO THE CONTRACTOR; AND

2 ~~(H)~~ PAY ANY INTEREST THAT:

3 ~~1.~~ HAS ACCRUED ON THE RETAINAGE; AND

4 ~~2.~~ IS DUE AND PAYABLE TO THE CONTRACTOR.

5 (5) IF THERE IS A DISPUTE OR CONTRACT CLAIM BETWEEN THE
 6 CONTRACTOR AND THE PUBLIC BODY CONCERNING THE SATISFACTORY
 7 COMPLETION OF A CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION, THE PUBLIC BODY SHALL
 8 RELEASE THE RETAINAGE AND ANY INTEREST DUE TO THE CONTRACTOR WITHIN 120
 9 DAYS OF AFTER THE RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE OR CONTRACT CLAIM.

10 (B) (1) A CONTRACTOR MAY NOT RETAIN A PERCENTAGE OF PAYMENTS DUE
 11 A SUBCONTRACTOR THAT EXCEEDS THE PERCENTAGE OF PAYMENTS RETAINED BY
 12 THE PUBLIC BODY.

13 (2) PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO
 14 PROHIBIT A CONTRACTOR FROM WITHHOLDING ANY AMOUNT IN ADDITION TO
 15 RETAINAGE IF THE CONTRACTOR DETERMINES THAT A SUBCONTRACTOR'S
 16 PERFORMANCE UNDER THE SUBCONTRACT PROVIDES REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR
 17 WITHHOLDING THE ADDITIONAL AMOUNT.

18 (C) (1) A SUBCONTRACTOR MAY NOT RETAIN A PERCENTAGE OF PAYMENTS
 19 DUE A LOWER TIER SUBCONTRACTOR THAT EXCEEDS THE PERCENTAGE OF
 20 PAYMENTS RETAINED FROM THE SUBCONTRACTOR.

21 (2) PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO
 22 PROHIBIT A SUBCONTRACTOR FROM WITHHOLDING ANY AMOUNT IN ADDITION TO
 23 RETAINAGE IF THE SUBCONTRACTOR DETERMINES THAT A LOWER TIER
 24 SUBCONTRACTOR'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE SUBCONTRACT PROVIDES
 25 REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR WITHHOLDING THE ADDITIONAL AMOUNT.

26 (D) ~~IF RETAINAGE HAS BEEN PLACED IN ESCROW UNDER § 17-111 OF THIS~~
 27 ~~SUBTITLE, EACH PAYMENT OF RETAINAGE SHALL INCLUDE A PRO RATA PORTION OF~~
 28 ~~INTEREST EARNED.~~

29 ~~(E)~~ THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO LIMIT THE APPLICATION OF
 30 THE REMAINING PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBTITLE.

31 ~~17-111.~~

32 ~~(A)~~ THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY PROCUREMENT CONTRACT
 33 FUNDED WITH TAX EXEMPT FINANCING.

34 ~~(B)~~ ~~(+)~~ SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION, A CONTRACTOR
 35 UNDER A PROCUREMENT CONTRACT THAT A PUBLIC BODY AWARDS FOR
 36 CONSTRUCTION IS ENTITLED TO HAVE RETAINAGE UNDER THE PROCUREMENT
 37 CONTRACT PLACED IN AN ESCROW ACCOUNT IF THE CONTRACTOR:

1 (1) ~~ELECTS THAT PROCEDURE IN THE PROCUREMENT CONTRACT~~
2 ~~IN THE SPACE PROVIDED FOR THAT ELECTION; AND~~

3 (II) ~~SUBMITS TO THE PUBLIC BODY AN ESCROW AGREEMENT THAT~~
4 ~~MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION.~~

5 (2) ~~THE PROCUREMENT CONTRACT SHALL IDENTIFY THE ESCROW~~
6 ~~AGENT.~~

7 (C) ~~THE ESCROW AGREEMENT SHALL:~~

8 (1) ~~BE ON A FORM THAT THE PUBLIC BODY PROVIDES;~~

9 (2) ~~INCLUDE THE COMPLETE ADDRESS OF BOTH THE ESCROW AGENT~~
10 ~~AND THE SURETY;~~

11 (3) ~~AUTHORIZE THE PUBLIC BODY TO PAY RETAINAGE TO THE ESCROW~~
12 ~~AGENT; AND~~

13 (4) ~~BE SIGNED BY:~~

14 (1) ~~THE CONTRACTOR;~~

15 (II) ~~THE SURETY FOR THE CONTRACTOR; AND~~

16 (III) ~~THE ESCROW AGENT.~~

17 (D) ~~ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS~~
18 ~~SECTION, THE PUBLIC BODY SHALL PAY THE RETAINAGE TO THE ESCROW AGENT~~
19 ~~UNLESS:~~

20 (1) ~~FEDERAL MONEY IS INVOLVED AND APPLICATION OF THIS SECTION~~
21 ~~WOULD JEOPARDIZE TIMELY RECOVERY OF THAT FEDERAL MONEY; OR~~

22 (2) ~~RETAINAGE IS WITHHELD FOR:~~

23 (1) ~~LACK OF PROGRESS ON THE PART OF THE CONTRACTOR; OR~~

24 (II) ~~OTHER VIOLATIONS BY THE CONTRACTOR.~~

25 (E) ~~IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ESCROW AGREEMENT, A CONTRACTOR MAY~~
26 ~~REQUIRE AN ESCROW AGENT:~~

27 (1) ~~TO INVEST THE RETAINAGE PLACED IN THE ESCROW ACCOUNT; AND~~

28 (2) ~~TO THE EXTENT THE CONTRACTOR IS ENTITLED TO RETAINAGE~~
29 ~~UNDER SUBSECTION (F)(2)(II) OF THIS SECTION, TO PAY THE EARNINGS ON THE~~
30 ~~INVESTMENT TO THE CONTRACTOR.~~

31 (F) (1) ~~RETAINAGE MAY BE RELEASED TO THE CONTRACTOR ONLY AS~~
32 ~~DIRECTED BY THE PUBLIC BODY.~~

1 (2) ~~AT THE TIME OF FINAL PAYMENT, THE PUBLIC BODY SHALL DIRECT~~
2 ~~THE ESCROW AGENT TO SETTLE THE ESCROW ACCOUNT BY DISTRIBUTING MONEY~~
3 ~~IN THE ESCROW ACCOUNT IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:~~

4 (1) ~~TO THE PUBLIC BODY FOR ANY CLAIM IT MAY HAVE AGAINST~~
5 ~~THE CONTRACTOR UNDER THE PROCUREMENT CONTRACT; AND~~

6 (1) ~~TO THE CONTRACTOR.~~

7 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall be
8 construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have
9 any effect on or application to any contracts entered into before the effective date of
10 this Act.

11 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
12 October 1, 2003.